

**Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of)	
)	CG Docket No. 02-311
Biennial Review 2002)	
)	

**COMMENTS OF
TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR THE DEAF, INC.**

1. Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (“TDI”) hereby submits its Comments to the Federal Communications Commission’s (the Commission”) Public Notice in the above-referenced proceeding.¹

I. INTRODUCTION

2. TDI is a national advocacy organization actively engaged in representing the interests of the twenty-eight million Americans who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deaf-blind. TDI’s mission is to promote equal access to broadband, media and telecommunications for the aforementioned constituency groups through consumer education and involvement, technical assistance and consulting, application of existing and emerging technologies, networking and collaboration, uniformity of standards, and national policy development and advocacy.

II. COMMENTS

3. Only through equal access is TDI’s constituency able to enjoy the opportunities and benefits of the telecommunications revolution to which all Americans are entitled. Moreover, this access is in the overall public interest, because only by ensuring equal access for

¹ The Commission Seeks Public Comment in the 2002 Biennial Review of Telecommunications Regulations within the Purview of the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau, CG Docket No. 02-311, *Public Notice*, FCC 02-265 (Sep. 26, 2002)(“Public Notice”).

all can society benefit from the myriad skills and talents of persons with disabilities.

4. The current regulations are beneficial to industry as well. While ensuring that access to persons with disabilities takes place, the regulations also afford the opportunity for members of the telecommunications industry to expand their market share to a much under-utilized segment of the population, and thus achieve their business objectives.

5. Consequently, TDI strongly opposes any repeal or revisions that weaken regulations related to Section 255 of the Communications Act or the Commission's rules listed in Attachment A of the Public Notice. Because of these regulations, TDI's constituency enjoys telecommunications access that would not otherwise be available. Market forces and competition cannot take the place of these regulations, which are the culmination of two decades of efforts to achieve telecommunications access. The current regulations, administered and enforced by the FCC, must remain in place for access to remain available.

III. CONCLUSION

6. The FCC should leave the disability related telecommunications/technology regulations fully intact; these regulations should be revised only to the extent that they are strengthened. They are needed to protect all Americans' rights to access telecommunications services.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: October 18, 2002